



In Memoriam.

JOSEPH S. RILEY.

A EULOGY

Delivered by P. H. P. WILLIAM J. KELLY, in *Harmony*
H. R. A. Chapter, No. 52.



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JOSEPH SMITH RILEY.

A EULOGY

DELIVERED BY

COMPANION P. H. P. WILLIAM J. KELLY,

IN

Harmon Chapter, No. 52, F. R. A. M.

At its regular meeting held at Masonic Temple,

ON

FRIDAY EVENING, AUGUST 6th, A. D. 1875.

A. I. 2405.



HARMONY HOLY ROYAL ARCH CHAPTER,

No. 52.

CONSTITUTED APRIL 28th, A. D. 1794, A. I. 2324.

MASONIC TEMPLE,
Philadelphia, Sept. 3d, A. D. 1875, A. I. 2405.

At the regular meeting of HARMONY H. R. A. CHAPTER,
No. 52, held this evening, present :

Companion JOHN CURTIS, *M. E. High Priest,*

Companion PHILIP W. CRAWFORD, *King,*

Companion GEORGE L. RAUCH, *Scribe,*

Companion R. LLOYD LEE, *Treasurer,*

Companion WILLIAM H. LIST, *Secretary,*

Companions DANIEL THOMPSON and GEORGE GRISCOM,
P. G. H. P's.; P. H. P's. JOHN L. YOUNG, EDWARD STRICK-
LAND, HENRY CHRISTIAN, R. LLOYD LEE, WILLIAM J.
KELLY, GEORGE W. KENDRICK, JR., WILLIAM N. VIGUERS,

WILLIAM H. BURKHARDT, and other officers and members in their respective stations and places :

ANDREW ROBENO, JR., M. E. Grand High Priest.

HARMAN BAUGH, P. G. H. P.

B. FRANK ABBETT, H. P. of Oriental Chapter, No. 183, and other visitors.

The M. E. High Priest arose in his place, and said :

COMPANIONS :—At every meeting of the Chapter during the present Masonic year, with but two exceptions, it has been my melancholy duty to announce from this chair the death of one or more of our companions ; some have been taken from us in their early manhood, some in the prime of life, while others were permitted to remain with us until they reached a green old age. The announcement I have to make to-night is to me the most mournful of all, and will be received by you with the deepest sorrow. He whom we have been accustomed to revere as our father in Royal Arch Masonry, has passed within the inner veil of the Heavenly Tabernacle, into the presence of the Grand High Priest above, where he now receives the reward of his zeal and perseverance, in everlasting peace and happiness.

Past Grand High Priest JOSEPH SMITH RILEY

is no more ; our venerable companion has gone to his reward. He died on Friday August 27th, at the ripe age

of eighty-six years; fifty-eight of which he was in full membership in this Chapter. Nearly all these years were passed by him in official position; one as Scribe, one as King, two as High Priest, and forty-nine as Secretary—a continuous service, unequalled in duration in any organization, save in one instance*—the incumbent of the latter office beyond the recollection of any of the present members of the Chapter; before the most of us were born. So accustomed were we to see him at his place, that when increasing age and infirmities compelled him to relinquish it, it seemed to us that we met in a strange Chapter, and not in our own. He has passed from his labors to eternal rest. Faithful unto death, he receives his Crown of Life.

It would be presumption in me to attempt a recital of his virtues and his services; that duty I resign to a more eloquent tongue. Let us cherish the bright example he has left us, and

“So live that when our summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan,”

that we, like him, may be prepared to pass from earth to glorious immortality.

Past High Priest WILLIAM J. KELLY then arose and said:

TO THE M. E. H. P. AND COMPANIONS OF HARMONY H. R. A.
CHAPTER, No. 52,

Companions:

Having been delegated by our M. E. H. P. to prepare a memoriam of our late lamented and venerated

* R. W. Brother John Dove, who has held the office of Grand Secretary of the Grand Lodge, F. and A. M. of Virginia, fifty-six consecutive years.

Companion JOSEPH S. RILEY, I feel it incumbent upon myself to apologize in advance for any shortcomings you may find in this paper, and to honestly plead "want of time," in extenuation of its many defects. I was ordered at noon on Monday of this week, to prepare it for this meeting, and were it not for the kindness I have experienced at the hands of our M. E. Grand Secretary and his assistants, our own Secretary and the family of our deceased companion, I would not have been able to have responded at all, and I here beg leave to tender them, one and all, my grateful acknowledgements. The many points which will be referred to in his Masonic life were handed me Thursday (yesterday) and the task of separating, collating, sifting and arranging them then commenced, and I, in justice to you and myself, repeat that "want of time" must plead with you in my favor.

The theme, however, is one that ought to inspire eloquence under any circumstances. A good, useful, charitable, industrious companion, after living to a rare old age, all of whose life has been devoted to such benevolence as to make him an exception even among the many bright examples our order boasts, has been called away; and while I am fully aware that in this practical age sentiment is not largely cultivated, yet from an intimate Masonic friendship of many years, as a companion and an officer, and in memory of those quiet but brilliant virtues which he so largely possessed, I may be permitted to say that my task has been no easy one, in

preparing and recapitulating that which I know he can never do among us again.

JOSEPH SMITH RILEY

was born in Front Street above Walnut, in this City, October 7th, 1789. His father died when he was one year old, and his mother when he was nine years of age, thus leaving him on the mere verge of boyhood an orphan, apparently without any immediate relations to take any interest in his future; an orphan, who in looking over the vast expanse, greater because of his inexperience, without a guide and probably without a friend to steer that rudderless bark even with a promise of a haven of safety! We find him next, apprenticed by regular indenture to Mr. William Lewis, a paper maker, whose mill was located near Darby, Delaware County, Pa.; and at ten years of age he commenced working in the mill as a regular hand. The usual hours of labor at that time, were in summer from 4½ A. M. to 7½ P. M., and in winter from 7 o'clock A. M. to 8 o'clock P. M. He seems to have remained with Mr. Lewis until December, 1803, a period of four years, when he was apprenticed to Mr. William Pierce, currier, Third Street above Dock, afterwards the firm of Hamill & Pierce. He remained with them for six years, nine months and sixteen days, or within two months of his majority; he then started the currying business for himself on Third Street, next door to the corner of Vine, in 1812, and continued there prosperously

until 1832. In the meantime, he had built a store on Third Street, opposite Branch, four stories high, and of very tasteful design, which for some time had the reputation of being the largest and finest within our City's limits; he occupied his new quarters with success until 1835, when he disposed of his business with a view of retiring from active pursuits and living on the competence which he had so nobly and honorably won. He had sadly miscalculated his temperament, however, for idleness very soon became a burden much harder to bear than any responsibility could be; yet, too honorable to go back to the business, in any form, which he had disposed of, he launched forth into a new, and at that time rather crude field, viz., the sale of Western produce, starting on the wharf, below Walnut Street, January 1st, 1836. His partner, Mr. Vanamiringe, having large experience in that line, and both being possessed of energy, determination and honesty, they prospered during four years of their co-partnership, but during the last year they were together they lost heavily, and at the end of the five years for which they had formed their co-partnership, Companion Riley retired crippled in fortune, but with his business honor unsullied. He then started the dry-goods business at the corner of Eighth and Vine Streets, and remained in it two years; removed from there to Second and Duke Streets, where he lived four years, during which time he was nominated for Mayor of the District of Northern Liberties, in 1844, and while he had more votes than either of his two competitors, yet by law

the election was thrown into the hands of the Commissioners of that District, who being of the same political party as the second highest candidate, Mr. John Belsterling, that gentleman was chosen Mayor. He removed in January, 1847, to the house 927 North Sixth Street, where he lived continuously until his death. For two years he acted as clerk for Dr. Stineberger, at Ninth and Willow Streets; then went as business manager for McKnight & McClintock, wholesale coal dealers, Walnut below Second Street, after which he rested for several years. In 1863 he was appointed U. S. Storekeeper for the coal oil warehouse of Wallace & Curtiss, Chestnut Street Wharf, Schuylkill, and continued in that capacity three years, since which time he ceased to be regularly employed.

PUBLIC POSITIONS.

February 1830, Honorable George Wolf, who had just been elected Governor of this State, appointed him Bark Inspector which position he held for six years. He was stationed at Green Street wharf during his official term as Inspector, and by his thorough knowledge of his business and his incorruptible integrity, he raised the standard of what was termed Philadelphia Bark, to such a high degree that it became celebrated throughout the whole United States, and remains to this day one of the leading quotations in all markets. He was a Guardian of the Poor in the District of Northern Liberties for many years, during which time the poor of the district used to

wait upon him at his house in large numbers, and through his quiet benevolence, his kitchen cooked for a larger family than many of us can conceive of. He was decidedly of a religious temperament, and was for many years actively engaged in religious enterprise. So far as we can recollect, he always showed a deep reverence for religion and the institutions necessary to carry out the forms of religion without regard to sect. The importance of personal religion impressed him deeply; at a very early age he became piously connected with a church, and never for one day lost his membership with the church of his choice. He always maintained domestic worship in his family morning and evening. The death of his children, from time to time, deeply affected him, and particularly that of his son Thomas H., who died February 22d, 1858, after a short sickness. He was always reserved in the expression of religious feelings; still his conversation so pure and his manner so gentle, gave you an involuntary assurance that his thoughts dwelt much upon his practical religious duties, and especially upon preparation for another world. In his manner he was humble, and of late years, you could observe an increasing tenderness of feeling and a desire to impress his family with the conviction that he would not be long with them; but a short time before his death he made a prayer which to those who attended at his bedside, was like a voice from another world, and although not able to speak immediately preceding his death, yet he evidently possessed full consciousness, and fully recognized each member of

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his family then present; it was noticed that his lips moved as in prayer, and he gently passed away. His life, marked with uniform wisdom and integrity, his deep humility, his deep reverence for profound majesty, his habitual preparation for death, his humble trust in God, left nothing to be desired for the consolation of his family under their great loss. In 1815, he was one of the founders of St. John's Episcopal Church, corner of St. John and Brown Streets, and was the accounting warden for twenty years. He then connected himself with Grace Church, Twelfth and Cherry Streets, and continued for seven years; then with St. Phillip's, Vine below Eighth, for two years; was also one of the founders of, and continued his membership with, Advent Church until he died. He was one of the founders of the Northern Dispensary, which was organized forty years ago, and continued to take an active part in that great charity for a period of twenty-five years, and who can estimate the good accomplished by that modest undertaking? A number of good men, ever on the alert to assist the distressed, with no thought of the labor and anxiety which they entailed upon themselves, looking only to the alleviation of their suffering fellow-creatures, agreeing to forego all the pleasures of the home fireside they loved so well, and meet and solicit aid during sunshine and rain, that they may ease some poor person destitute of the means of purchasing medical advice or medicine. The fervent blessings from the millions benefitted will ascend to Heaven like bright incense to their praise. He was a consistent temperance man, and

whether mistaken in the means he took to accomplish his ends or not, he worked unceasingly to accomplish his plans for total abstinence. He organized the first temperance society that was ever held in this City, in 1832, in the old church, Race Street below Fourth, the pastor of which, the Rev. Brother William Sproule, was one of our most devoted and enthusiastic Masons.

HIS MILITARY CAREER.

In 1813, he joined Captain Henry Meyers' company, 1st Pennsylvania Regiment, Colonel Clement Biddle, and marched to Camp Dupont, near Wilmington, Delaware. The Regiment was on its way to meet the enemy, but the battle of North Point having decided the campaign, he did not get into active service. He remained with them three months during that campaign, and seemed to have imbibed a great enthusiasm for military display, as he kept in continuous membership with various organizations until 1836. He raised a military company, called the City Phalanx, attached to the 102d Pennsylvania Regiment, and was elected Lieutenant-Colonel; held that rank at the time of the visit of the distinguished patriot, the Marquis de Lafayette, to this country, and took an active and enthusiastic part in all the displays and attentions shown him while here. When Brother General Robert Patterson was elected Brigadier General, he was elected to the Colonelcy of that regiment, and held that position for a period of ten years. As an evidence of his zeal in this, as in all he

undertook, it is said that the 102d was the largest regiment in the country, many of the companies having as many as 250 men. He was then elected Captain of the Washington Blues, and continued with them two years; was immediately elected Captain of the National Troop, a cavalry company in 1832, remaining with them four years, and upon resigning from them in 1836, left the military service forever.

He married Miss Mary Allison Slater, November 5th, 1812, by whom he had thirteen children, ten boys and three girls, seven of whom lived to man and womanhood, viz., 5 boys and two girls, and at the time of his death 2 boys and 2 girls were still living. Benjamin, one of his sons, was a member of this Chapter, and is no doubt remembered by many of us, in his devotion to his father in his duty of Secretary; the punctuality of his attendance, the care and filial attention so tenderly and assiduously bestowed, were alike honorable to father and son. He died June 27th, 1870. His death no doubt accelerated the demise of his father, as he seemed to break down perceptibly after that event. At the time of his death, he left thirty-two grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren. His wife departed this life July 29th, 1874, after living together sixty-two years,—a married life of greater duration than the natural life vouchsafed most of us. After the death of his wife, Companion Riley lost all spirit; she was to him, all through life, a stay and a guide, and when she passed away he had no thought, wish or desire but that he might be called to follow her.

In 1818, Dr. Parrish, a distinguished physician of this city, told him he had consumption, and predicted his death at or about the change of seasons of that year. Our companion, with indomitable energy, however, concluded not to die supinely, and buying himself a horse, commenced taking active exercise, getting up early he would, before business hours, ride for several miles into the country, and for five years he never missed a day in taking his horse-back ride; storm or sunshine, rain or snow never deterred him; at the end of which time, he was restored to perfect health, and for forty years subsequently his health was excellent; and I am informed that during that forty years he was never confined to his house for a single day, except two, during the time his wife was sick, by any bodily ailment—a record of health which speaks volumes for his careful habits and abstemious temperament.

HIS MASONIC CAREER.

Early in life he became impressed with a desire to join the Masonic Fraternity, and at the age of twenty-two years presented his petition, and was initiated in Lodge No. 52, A. Y. M., April 3d, 1811; Passed May 1st, 1811; Raised June 5th, 1811; Resigned, June 12th, to become a member of Phoenix Lodge, No. 130, which was chartered June 3d, 1811, principally from members of Lodge 52. He thus became the first member of that Lodge, and while not a charter member, and not initiated in 130, yet the honor of being its first member is his, and it was an honor of which he was justly proud,—adverting to the fact

often during the latter years of his life. The Lodge, one of the best we have, always from the time of his becoming connected with it until the present moment, seems never to have tired showing its approval of our companion's sterling qualities, and by its course as a Lodge, as well as by its individual members, seemed never to weary in testifying to his worth, both during his life and since his death. He was elected Junior Warden, June, 1812, and again December, 1812; Senior Warden, June, 1813, and Worshipful Master, June, 1816. He was elected Treasurer, December, 1817, and served almost uninterruptedly in that office, with accuracy and fidelity, until within a few years, when he was elected Honorary Treasurer, which position he held at the time of his death.

His attendance at the meetings of his Lodge was remarkable, and during the Anti-Masonic excitement of 1831-32, he was conspicuously careful to attend the meetings, not only of his own Lodge, but of the other Lodges then meeting in this city, and the late lamented Past Grand Master, Brother Willam Barger, frequently and warmly thanked him for assistance rendered him during that period of trial when it required courage of no mean order to face the prejudice of an inflamed public opinion, with loud, frequent and vehement reports of murder attached. He seems to have attended, not through any feeling of boast or bravery, but would go quietly to the meetings, perform his part, and as quietly retire to his home; and indeed, although I have said he was conspicuous in his attendance, yet it was, after all, only the quiet

regularity of his attention to duties, when so many faltered by the wayside, that made him so.

He was a useful and honored member of our R. W. Grand Lodge for a great number of years, and although he never held office therein, he was probably more valuable on that account, being able to give his assistance upon the most important committees. He took a very active part in rebuilding the Masonic Hall, on Chestnut Street, after what is termed the great fire, in which the old hall was consumed; and also took a leading part in the building of the hall which we have so recently vacated. His labors to secure the erection of the building and the final liquidation of the debt were unceasing and intelligent, and were finally, as we know, crowned with success.

He has been for many years Chairman of the Trustees of the Grand Lodge Charity Fund, by the repeated elections by his brethren of the R. W. Grand Lodge, and so well has that fund been managed that from a small beginning by a number of Lodges, it has grown into a power celebrated among our brethren over the whole of the United States, and indeed, beyond the confines of this continent, carrying innumerable blessings to the families of many deceased Master Masons, and earning the pure prayers of the widow and orphan from every clime, and making our order blessed and holy in her great charity; but how much more blessed is he who, without hope of fee or reward, has unselfishly given years of his time to perfect that noble undertaking for the benefit of the humble and the helpless?

While Worshipful Master of his Lodge, he presented his application to Harmony Chapter, No. 52, H. R. A. Masons, December 4th, 1816, and was approved and exalted January 1st, 1817, at that time, it will be remembered, the working of the Mark Master and M. E. Master's degrees were not as now, hence no reference to those degrees upon our books. He seems to have thrown himself with his accustomed energy into assisting the Chapter, for we shortly find him appointed to revise its By-Laws.

He was soon selected to fill the chairs. He was elected High Priest of this Chapter, December 7th, 1821, and re-elected December 6th, 1822; December 5th, 1823, was elected Secretary, and served continuously upwards of fifty years, until within a short period, when his declining powers made it incumbent upon him to decline a re-election, when he was, by the unanimous vote of the companions of his Chapter, made Honorary Secretary, with the regular salary attached, which position he held until his death. At the meeting held October 7th, 1859, it being his 70th birthday, there was some very interesting ceremonies. He made a few remarks, and the members, one and all, came forward to speak fraternal words of congratulation and encouragement to the hale old hero, which seems to have made a profound impression upon his mind.

His first appearance in the Grand Chapter was in May, 1821, from which period he was an active participant in all its doings, serving upon all its most important com-

mittees. He was elected Grand Scribe in November, 1825; King, November, 1826; High Priest, November, 1827; Secretary, November, 1828; and was re-elected in 1829, '30, '31, '32, '33, '34, '35, and '36, and in 1837 declined a re-election. The bent of his mind for assisting the poor and needy can be traced through his whole life. In 1821 he strenuously endeavored to induce the M. E. Grand Chapter to create a charity fund for the widows and orphans of deceased Royal Arch Masons, and while at the time was partially successful, had finally to abandon the project for want of means. He joined Mary Commandery in 1869, and for a man of his years was remarkable for the interest he took in all its doings. Finally, the punctuality of his attendance at the meetings of the Masonic bodies of which he was a member was remarkable until within a very short period, and many will remember that in the Masonic Hall, Chestnut Street, the end of the middle line of sofas next to the R. W. J. G. Warden, was always conceded to be Brother Riley's seat, and if occupied by any one before he arrived was always cheerfully and fraternally vacated upon his approach.

Such, M. E. H. P., was the life of this good man, and his death was a fitting example to us, his brethren and companions, of the way we should properly estimate our duties. An attentive, ardent Mason, fully subscribing to all its edicts, and appreciating its great good to the human family, yet he never for one moment confounded it with his religion—keeping them separate, as they should be;

strikingly great in both, it cannot help impressing us with the well-balanced mind and the correct principles of our deceased companion.

I could, M. E. H. P., mourn in the depths of my heart at the recollection of his many virtues and his friendship ; and in the feeling of his loss I would embalm his memory in my best affections. His personal regard, so long and so warmly continued to me, I esteem one of the greatest blessings of my life. Companion Riley died in old age, not by a violent stroke from the hand of Death, not by the sudden sundering of the ties of nature, but by a gradual wearing out of his constitution. He enjoyed through life, indeed, remarkable health ; he took sufficient exercise, loved the open air, and, avoiding all excesses, controlled his conduct and habits of life by the rules of prudence and moderation.

His funeral on Monday last, at Woodland Cemetery, largely attended by his numerous friends, and most numerously attended by his brethren in Masonry, was an event to favorably impress any one who might chance to be present. As the bier, tenderly carried by his brethren, approached the grave, the scene was solemn ; and when the earth began to fall upon his coffin it made us aspirate unconsciously, but fervently,—May God in His infinite mercy take His servant unto Himself.

Resolved, That the members of this Chapter have heard with profound emotion of the decease of our companion, Past Grand High Priest Joseph S. Riley, one of the most

eminent and distinguished Masons this jurisdiction has ever had, and as well in the discharge of our duty as in obedience to the dictates of our own private feelings, we think it proper to mark this occasion by some attempt to record our estimate of his pre-eminent abilities and high character.

Resolved, That the high character and services of Companion Riley demand prominent commemoration; that throughout his long life, whether as a private person or in office in our beloved craft, he maintained a wide and various intercourse with men, and cherished a constant and deep interest in all affairs pertaining to our order, and by his vast practical wisdom and sagacity—the fruit of great intellectual endowments—matured thought and profound observation, and by the soundness of his opinions and the comprehensiveness and elevated tone of his views, he exerted, at all times, a great and salutary influence upon the sentiments of our order as well as in the community in which he lived, and that as a member of his lodge, 130, the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, his Chapter, or the Grand Chapter of this State, during a period of many years, during which many important affairs arose which demanded the wisdom of the wisest, he was distinguished among the most eminent men for his ability in debate, for attention to all the duties of his various trusts, for moderation, for prudence, for fidelity to all the obligations which he assumed.

Resolved, That we condole with his family in their loss

of so good a protector, and assure them we feel with them a void in our midst since he has passed away.

Resolved, That the working tools and jewels of this Chapter be placed in mourning for the space of six months.

On motion of Companion Philip W. Crawford, *King*, seconded by Companion George L. Rauch, *Scribe*, it was

Resolved, That one thousand copies of the Eulogy delivered by Companion P. H. P. William J. Kelly be printed for the benefit of the members of the Chapter.

The Most Excellent Grand High Priest, ANDREW ROBENO, JR., arose and said :

Most Excellent High Priest:

It has been with the most profound attention and thrilling interest that I have listened to the very beautiful, truthful and exhaustive eulogy pronounced by Past High Priest William J. Kelly, upon the life and character of our most venerable companion, Past Grand High Priest Joseph S. Riley, and sir, what a beautiful, what a glorious and finished record does it present to us for our admiration ;— of duty well and faithfully performed, and of a long and eventful life well and successfully spent. How full of noble example ! of wise admonitions, sage experience and holy inspiration to us ! calling upon each to strive and emulate the zeal, the fervor, the devotion and spotless integrity which characterized him and his acts.

Such a life, Most Excellent Sir, as has been presented for our consideration to-night as embodied in the eighty-six years of Companion Joseph S. Riley, is indeed worth living for.

Yes, sir! Harmony Chapter has just cause to put on the sable weeds of mourning and be clothed for the time being in the habiliments of woe, for a great and good man has fallen from among you; a bright light has been extinguished from your altars, and the spirit of a true and noble soul has passed from earth away.

The old familiar face and patriarchal form, Most Excellent Sir, which for more than three-score years was wont to be found in his "old accustomed place," will never more again grace you with his venerable presence, or counsel you with his sage advice and perfect experience; but then I am sure that his pure and upright life, with his consistent and faithful performance of every duty, will be ever, as you think of him, a constant inspiration.

It is to be regretted, Most Excellent High Priest, very sincerely, that the five or six hundred companions composing the membership of your Chapter are not all present to have listened to the story of this good man's life as it fell from the lips of the eloquent companion who related it. They would have been, as we are, not only deeply interested and greatly profited, but inspired to "go and do likewise."

The beautiful and holy lessons which are taught in our

Chapter have had their illustration in our companion's life and death, which were practical exemplifications of the sublime lessons of wisdom and morality which they teach us.

Companions of Harmony Chapter, these old landmarks are fast fading away: let us, while we cherish with sincere devotion their precious memories, likewise imitate their virtues; and while we remember the good old ways in which they walked, may we be careful to tread in their footsteps; that with them, when we have passed over life's rugged path, we may be admitted within the rail of Heaven to the full enjoyment of life eternal.

Eloquent addresses were delivered by Past Grand High Priests Harman Baugh and George Griscom, and Past High Priests John L. Young, Edward Strickland, Henry Christian, R. Lloyd Lee, George W. Kendrick, Jr., William N. Viguers, and William H. Burkhardt.



